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Twenty Years: Preparing for the 6/4 Anniversary

April 14, 2009 in Uncategorized by [The China Beat](#) | [6 comments](#)

Some *China Beat* contributors have mentioned to us that they've been receiving requests from journalists and teachers for resources to turn to in writing and teaching about the up-coming twentieth anniversary of the Tiananmen protests. Over the next few weeks, we'll be posting lists of resources—some online, others in print.

This first list of readings is based entirely on a single website, "[Tiananmen: The Gate of Heavenly Peace](#)," which presents varied perspectives on China's 1989, with info about an important Long Bow Group film (*The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, 1995) and diverse online readings, available full-text. *China Beat* views the film, for which the website in question was created, as a major interpretation of the events of 1989—but we aren't impartial where this is concerned, as frequent *China Beat* contributor Geremie Barmé was the main academic consultant for and chief writer of the film (that was directed by Carma Hinton and Richard Gordon and had a roster of scholarly advisers that included this blog's co-founder Jeff Wasserstrom), and Barmé was also the main creative force behind the very innovative (especially for its time—in went up in the 1990s) website.

The site has so much material that it can be overwhelming. Here are a few places to get started:

- 1) A [detailed chronology of events](#).
- 2) [Background on the film](#) and the controversy it generated.
- 3) [Eye-witness accounts by academic China specialists](#), mostly based outside of the capital that year (though there's also a piece on Beijing by Geremie Barmé).
- 4) [Western coverage of the events](#).
- 5) [Chinese official accounts of the events](#) and other miscellaneous readings, such as a piece by Tiananmen activist and a Charter 08 drafter Liu Xiaobo.

Unfortunately, if your local library does not have a copy of *Gate of Heavenly Peace* on hand, it is a little tough to get hold of. Distribution information is [available here](#), but Netflix does not even have the documentary in its catalogue and Frontline has not added the film to its online archive.

Tags: [6/4](#), [Gate of Heavenly Peace](#), [Tiananmen](#)